

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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USICA

E.O.11652: N/A
SUBJECT: QUESTIONS REGARDING CURRENT DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

A) CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA. HUNGARIANS DO NOT RAISE THIS TOPIC AND TRY TO AVOID DISCUSSING IT WHEN THEY CAN. WHEN THEY ARE PUSHED INTO A DISCUSSION, HOWEVER, THEY LISTEN POLITELY, AT BEST GIVE BLAND ANSWERS, AND SHOW NO ENTHUSIASM FOR THE CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA.

B) US POSITION IN AFRICA. THE SAME RELUCTANCE AS ABOVE APPLIES TO THIS QUESTION. HOWEVER, WHEN PRESSED HUNGARIANS GENERALLY REACT WITH HUNGARY IN MIND FIRST. THAT MEANS THAT THEY HOPE THAT THE US-SOVIET CONFRONTATION IN AFRICA WILL NOT GROW TO THE POINT THAT IT WILL ENDANGER EAST-WEST DETENTE, AND THEREBY HUNGARY'S EXPANDING CONTACTS WITH THE WEST.

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C) SOVIET ROLE. THE SOVIET ROLE IN AFRICA IS ALSO ONLY RELUCTANTLY DISCUSSED BY HUNGARIANS. SINCE HUNGARY HAS STRONG CULTURAL AND GROWING ECONOMIC INTERESTS WITH THE WEST, HUNGARIANS WOULD HATE TO SEE THESE INTERESTS ENDANGERED BY A SOVIET-AMERICAN CONFRONTATION IN AFRICA. FOR THIS REASON THE SOVIET ROLE IN AFRICA ONLY RECEIVES LUKE WARM SUPPORT IN PRIVATE DISCUSSIONS. ALTHOUGH HUNGARIANS NEVER SEEM TO SAY SO EXPLICITLY,

THEY SEEM TO HINT THAT A LESSER SOVIET ROLE IN AFRICA WOULD BE WELCOMED BY THEM.

D) EXPECTATION FROM THE U.S. WHAT HUNGARIANS WANT MOST FROM THE U.S., IN THEIR PERCEPTION OF THE QUESTION, IS NOT TO EXPAND AN AFRICAN PROBLEM INTO ONE THAT WILL AFFECT THE GENERAL PROCESS OF DETENTE. THEREFORE, THEY WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE U.S., AS WELL AS THE SOVIET UNION, NOT EXPAND THEIR ROLES IN AFRICA TO THE POINT WHERE THESE BECOME MAJOR NEGATIVE FORCES IN THE DETENTE PROCESS.

E) U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS AND EAST WEST DETENTE. HUNGARIANS ARE MOST CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF A MAJOR CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE SOVIET UNION ANYWHERE, INCLUDING AFRICA. SUCH A CONFRONTATION, HUNGARIANS ARE CERTAIN, CAN ONLY HAVE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES FOR THEM. THEIR CONCERN IS THAT IF THE EAST WEST DETENTE PROCESS IS INTERRUPTED, THEIR ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CONNECTIONS WITH THE WEST WILL BE SET BACK SEVERELY. SHOULD THAT HAPPEN, MANY OF THE GAINS MADE IN THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN HUNGARY, AS WELL AS FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS, THEY FEAR, WILL ULTIMATELY BE LOST TO THEM.
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